

NOW sith man understandeth generally, which is venial synne, thanne is it covenable to tellen specially of synnes whiche that many a man peraventure demeth hem nat synnes, & ne shryveth him nat of the same thynges; and yet natheles they been synnes. Soothly, as this clerkes writen, this is to seyn, that at every tyme that a man eteth or drynketh moore than suffiseth to the sustenance of his body, in certein he dooth synne. And eek whan he speketh moore than nedeth, it is synne. Eke whan he herkneth nat benignely the compleint of the poure. Eke whan he is in heele of body & wol nat faste, whan othere folk faste, withouten cause resonable. Eke whan he slepeth moore than nedeth, or whan he comth by thilke enchesoun to late to chirche, or to othere werkes of charite. Eke whan he useth his wyf, withouten sovereyn desir of engendrure, to the honour of God, or for the entente to yelde to hys wyf the dette of his body. Eke whan he wol nat visite the sike & the prisoner, if he may. Eke if he love wyf or child, or oother worldly thyng, moore than resoun requireth. Eke if he flater or blandise moore than hym oghte for any necessitee. Eke if he amenuse or withdrawe the almesse of the poure. Eke if he apparilleth his mete moore deliciously than nede is, or ete it to hastily by likerousnesse. Eke if he tale vanytees at chirche or at Goddes service, or that he be a talker of ydel wordes of folye or of vileynye; for he shal yelden accountes of it at the day of doome. Eke whan he biheteth or assurgeth to do thynges that he may nat perfourme. Eke whan that he, by lightnesse or folie, mysseyeth or scorneth his neigheboore. Eke whan he hath any wikked suspicioun of thyng, ther he ne woot of it no soothfastnesse. These thynges and mo withoute nombre been synnes, as seith Seint Augustyn.

NOW shal men understonde that albeit so that noon erthely man may eschue alle venial synnes, yet may he refreyne hym by the brennyng love that he hath to oure Lord Jhesu Crist, and by preyeres and confessioun & othere goode werkes, so that it shal but litel greve, for, as seith Seint Augustyn: If a man love God in swich manere, that al that evere he dooth is in the love of God, & for the love of God verrailly, for he brenneth in the love of God: looke, how muche that a drope of water that falleth in a fourneys ful of fyr anoyeth or greveth, so muche anoyeth a venial synne unto a man that is perfit in the love of Jhesu Crist. Men may also refreyne venial synne by receyvyng worthily of the precious body of Jhesu Crist;

by receyvyng eek of hooly water; by almesse; dede; by general confessioun of Confiteor at masse and at complyn; & by blessing of bisshopes & of preestes, & by oother goode werkes.

Explicit secunda pars Penitentie. Sequitur de septem peccatis mortalibus, et eorum dependentiis circumstantiis et speciebus.

NOW is it bihovely thyng to telle whiche been the deadly synnes, this is to seyn, chief saynes of synnes; alle they renne in o lecs, but in diverse maneres. Now been they cleped chief, and spryngers of alle othere synnes. Of the roote of these seven synnes thame is pride, the general roote of alle harmes; as ire; envye; accide or slewthe; avarice or covetise, to commune understandynges; glotonye, & lecherye. And everich of these chief synnes hath his braunches and his twiggis, as shal be declared in hire chapters folwyng.

De Superbia.

AND thogh so be that no man kan outrely telle the nombre of the twiggis & of the harmes that cometh of pride, yet wol I shewe a partie of hem, as ye shul understonde. There is inobedience, avauntynge, ypocrisie, despit, arrogance, impudence, swellynge of herte, insolence, elacioun, impacience, strif, contumacie, presumpcioun, irreverence, pertinacie, veyne glorie; and many another twig that I kan nat declare.

IN OBEDIENT, is he that disobeyeth for despit to the comandements of God and to his sovereyns, and to his goostly fader. Avauntour, is he that bosteth of the harm or of the bountee that he hath doon. Ypocrite, is he that hideth to shewe hym swich as he is, and sheweth hym swich as he noght is. Despitous, is he that hath desdeyn of his neigheboore, that is to seyn, of his evene Cristene, or hath despit to doon that hym oghte to do. Arrogant, is he that thynketh that he hath thilke bountees in hym that he hath noght, or weneth that he sholde have hem by his desertis; or elles he demeth that he be that he nys nat. Impudent, is he that for his pride hath no shame of his synnes. Swellynge of herte, is whan a man rejoyseth hym of harm that he hath doon. Insolent, is he that despiseth in his juggement alle othere folk as to regard of his value, and of his konnyng, and of his spekyng, and of his beryng. Elacioun, is whan he ne may neither suffre to have maister ne

felawe. Inpacient, is he that wol nat been ytaught ne undernome of his vice, and by strif werreth trouthe wityngly, and defendeth his folye. Contumax, is he that thurgh his indignacioun is agayns that thurgh his auctoritee or power of hem that overich sovereyns. Presumpcioun, is whan a man undertaketh an emprise that hym oghte nat do, or elles that he may nat do; and this is called surquidrie. Irreverence, is whan men do nat honour thereas hem oghte to doon, and waiten to be revered. Pertinacie, is whan man defendeth his folye, & trusteth to much in his owene wit. Teyneglorie, is for to have pompe and delit in his temporeel hynesse, and glorie delit in this worldly estaat. Tanglyng, is whan men speken to muche biforn folk, & clappen as a mille, and taken no hepe what they seye. And yet is ther a privee spece of pride, that waiteth first to be sawled er he wole sawle, al be he lasse worth than that oother is, peraventure; & eke he waiteth or desireth to sitte, or elles to goon above hym in the wey, or hisse pax, or been encensed, or goon to offryng biforn his neigheboore, & swiche semblable thynges; agayns his herte and his entente in swich a proud desir to be magnified and honoured biforn the peple. Now been ther two maneres of pride. That oon of hem is withinne the herte of man, and that oother is withoute; of whiche soothly these forseide thynges, & mo than I have seyd, apertenen to pride that is in the herte of man; & that othere speces of pride been withoute. But natheles that oon of these speces of pride is signe of that oother, right as the gaye leefael atte taverne is signe of the wyn that is in the celer. And this is in manye thynges: as in speche & contenance, and in outrageous array of clothyng; for certes, if ther ne hadde be no synne in clothyng, Crist wolde nat have noted and spoken of the clothyng of thilke riche man in the gospel. And, as seith Seint Gregorie: that Precious clothyng is cowpable for the derthe of it, and for his softenesse, and for his strangenesse and degisynesse, & for the superfluitee, and for the inordinat scantnesse of it. Alas! may men nat seen, as in oure dayes, the synful costlewe array of clothyng, and namely in to muche superfluitee, or elles in to desordinat scantnesse?

AS to the firste synne, that is in superfluitee of clothyng, which that maketh it so deere, to harm of the peple; nat oonly the cost of embrowdyng, the degise endentyng or barryng, owndyng, palyng, wyndyng or bendyng, and semblable wast of clooth in vanitee;

but ther is also costlewe furryng in hir gownes, so muche pownsonyng of chisels to maken holes, so muche daggyng of sheres; forthwith the superfluitee in lengthe of the forseide gownes, trailyng in the dong and in the mire, on horse & eek on foote, as wel of men as of women, that al thilke trailyng is verrailly as in effect wasted, consumed, thredbare, and roten with donge, rather than it is yeven to the poure; to greet damage of the forseide poure folk. And that in sondry wise; this is to seyn, that the moore that clooth is wasted, the moore it costeth to the peple for the scantnesse. And fortherover, if so be that they wolde yeven swich pownsoned and dagged clothyng to the poure folk, it is nat convenient to were for hire estaat, ne suffisant to beete hire necessitee, to kepe hem fro the distemperance of the firmament.

AND that oother side to speken of the horrible disordinat scantnesse of clothyng, as been these kuttid sloppes or haynselyns, that thurgh hire shortnesse ne covere nat the shameful membres of man, to wikked entente. Alas! somme of hem shewen the boce of hir shap, & the horrible swollen membres, that semeth lik the maladie of hirma, in the wrappyng of hir hoses; and eek the buttokes of hem faren as it were the hyndre part of a sheape in the fulle of the moone. And mooreover the wretched swollen membres that they shewe thurgh the degisynge, in departyng of hire hoses in whit and reed, semeth that half hir shameful privee membres weren flayne. And if so be that they departen hire hoses in othere colours, as is whit and blak, or whit and blew, or blak and reed, and so forth; thanne semeth it, as by variaunce of colour, that half the partie of hire privee membres were corrupt by the fir of Seint Antony, or by cancre, or by oother swich meschaunce. Of the hyndre part of hir buttokes, it is ful horrible for to see. For certes, in that partie of hir body theras they purgen hir stynkyng ordure, that foule partie shewe they to the peple poudly in despit of honestitee, the which honestitee that Jhesu Crist and his freendes observede to shewen in hir lyve.

NOW of the outrageous array of women, God woot, that though the visages of somme of hem seme ful chaast and debonaire, yet notifie they in hire array of atyr, likerousnesse and pride. I sey nat that honestitee in clothyng of man or woman is uncovenable, but certes the superfluitee or disordinat scantitee of clothyng is reprevable. Also the synne of aornement or of apparille is in thynges that apertenen to ridyng, as in to manye